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to her request for lists of fifty agricultural periodicals most desirable for indexing. These lists were studied carefully, and the number of votes each periodical received was recorded. Many periodicals received but one vote, others two or three, and others five and up. Finally a list of fifty receiving the greatest number of votes was made, and this list is appended to this report.

The situation in a nutshell is then that all of the agricultural libraries need and want an index to agricultural periodical literature and we have a list of the fifty magazines for which indexes are wanted by the greatest number. The question is then, how shall we get the index?

If Mr. Wilson could furnish us such an index at a price within the reach of our libraries, our troubles would surely be over. If this does not seem possible, is there anything left to us but co-operation of some sort?

#### List of Fifty Periodicals

Breeders' Gazette  
Country Gentleman  
Hoard's Dairyman  
Reliable Poultry Journal  
Wallace's Farmer  
Kimball's Dairy Farmer  
Fruit Grower & Farmer  
Garden Magazine  
Better Fruit  
Journal of Heredity

Rural New Yorker  
Journal Agricultural Science  
Farm and Fireside  
American Forestry  
Farm Poultry  
American Sheep Breeder  
Country Life in America  
Gardener's Chronicle  
Jersey Bulletin  
Green's Fruit Grower  
Market Growers' Journal  
Ohio Farmer  
Journal American Society Agronomy  
National Stockman & Farmer  
Orange Judd Farmer  
Progressive Farmer  
Berkshire World  
Chicago Dairy Produce  
Gleanings in Bee Culture  
New York Produce Review  
American Poultry Journal  
American Poultry Advocate  
American Fertilizer  
Florist's Exchange  
Florist's Review  
Horticulture  
Journal of Agricultural Research  
Creamery & Milk Plant Monthly  
Farmers' Review  
American Co-operative Journal  
American Breeder  
Canadian Horticulturist  
Practical Farmer  
Countryside Magazine  
Thresherman's Review  
Forestry Quarterly  
Homestead  
Poultry  
American Lumberman  
Field  
Shepherd's Journal

#### THE CIVICS ROOM

BY JOHN B. KAISER, *Librarian, Tacoma Public Library*

One of the most recent experiments in specialization within the public library has brought into being so-called Civics Rooms. They exist in name, so far as I have been able to ascertain, in but four libraries, namely, Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit and Louisville.

There is usually an intangible though compelling force—perhaps we may even say a tide in the affairs of men—which brings about as the result of a definite need

the creation of new agencies for satisfying or fulfilling the need.

A comparatively recent development in library work is the legislative reference library. It came into being when men more fully realized the seriousness of the problem of intelligent legislation in general, and it offered itself as a factor in the solution of this particular problem. Similarly, some years later the seriousness of the problem of municipal government be-

came more generally realized, and there were those who went as far as to say that from an economic standpoint the city is the greatest problem confronting the nation today. At once, here again, the library came forward and presented the specialized municipal reference library as one factor—and indeed a powerful one—in the problem of improving municipal government and administration.

Another similar case is presented by the business men's branch, illustrating library aid in solving the difficult problems of modern business in all its phases, from corporation management to efficient book-keeping for country groceries and from boosting buy-at-home campaigns to the latest opportunities for extending our overseas commerce.

To what, then, shall we ascribe the advent of the civics room, and in what way, if any, is it related to these other tried experiments in library specialization?

Accepting the conclusion that the civics room offers one factor in the solution of some pressing public problem, the compelling force in this case can be no other than the growing public demand for a more enlightened and more efficient citizenship. Civics, we are told, is "the science of civil government; the principles of government in their application to society." Or, if we prefer a different statement, it is "the science that treats of the government of cities, of citizenship, of the organizing of life in cities and of the relations between citizens and the government. Civics includes (1) Ethics, or the doctrine of duties in society, (2) Civil polity or governmental methods and machinery, (3) Law in its applications most directly involving the interests of society, (4) Economics or the principles or laws of wealth and exchange, (5) History of civic development and movement."

If this latter more comprehensive definition of civics is made the program of the civics room this new agency surely has a large place to fill, but the library civics room must be organized with a view to making the most of physical and financial

limitations and of the other features and phases of library work and available informational agencies. Legislative and municipal reference libraries certainly foster an enlightened knowledge of "the principles of government in their application to society," and business branches, by providing information on the laws and methods of trade and successful management, foster, at least indirectly, a better citizenship by providing an opportunity for advancement in one's chosen line of commercial endeavor. Is there, then, a place in library work for an additional agency of civic improvement such as the civics room, and if so, what is that place?

The Chicago Public Library, which opened its civics room May 1, 1912, furnishes the best concrete example of what we are discussing. It is also a proved success, so that any criticisms of it or suggestions regarding it are themselves open to question on the ground of being theoretical and untried. Its plan of operation is fully described in "Chicago Commerce" for April 26, 1912, (pages 23-27,) in an address given by Mr. Legler before the Ways and Means Committee of the Chicago Association of Commerce just prior to the formal opening of the room. "This department," says Mr. Legler, "is to be called, for want of a better term perhaps, the civics department of the library, and it will aim to center in one room the best and latest and the most up-to-date material which the library has among its resources affecting education, business and civics."

After three years of work with this civics room Miss Edith Kammerling, who has it in charge, outlines its present scope in the following detailed and effective manner:

The present scope of the public library civics department.

- a) National affairs.
- b) State affairs especially Illinois.
- c) Municipal affairs; as:

- Municipal dance halls
- Commission form of govt.
- Non-partisan elections
- Smoke nuisance
- Parks and playgrounds

- Garbage disposal
- Municipal markets
- Social surveys
- Subways
- Jitney bus
- Railroad terminals
- Municipal ice plants
- d) Political, social and economic; as:
  - Initiative and referendum
  - Woman suffrage
  - Immigration
  - Child labor
  - Housing
  - Social settlements
  - Syndicalism
  - Cost of living
  - Moving picture shows
  - Blue sky laws
  - Mothers' pensions
  - Juvenile courts
  - Open air schools
  - Social centers
- e) Topics of current interest; as:
  - Chicago boys' court
  - Delinquent girls' court
  - Public defender
  - Effemination question in the public schools
  - Juvenile-adult offender
  - Paying fines on the installment plan
  - Three-fourths decision in jury trials
  - Boards of public welfare
  - School savings banks
  - Recall
  - Short ballot
  - Minimum wage
  - Employers' liability
  - Employers' welfare institutions
  - Labor unions
  - Co-operation
  - International arbitration
  - Garden cities
  - Child welfare
  - Reformatories
  - Pension systems
  - Industrial education
  - Unemployment

This is truly an adherence to and a splendid development of Mr. Legler's original plans for a department concentrating the current data on educational, business and civic problems.

From the published reports of the Chicago Public Library<sup>1</sup> it appears that the civics rooms was used during its first year even more extensively than was anticipated, having received 43,187 recorded visitors who consulted over 40,000 books

and boxes of pamphlets and some 17,000 magazines and 6,500 volumes of bound newspapers. The second year's attendance was nearly 10,000 greater than the first and the increase in material used was greater in proportion. The Chicago Library's report for 1913-1914 (pages 31-33) furnishes further light on this subject, and presents an interesting selection from the thousands of questions asked.<sup>2</sup>

Turning now from a consideration of the actual scope of a civics room's work to a speculative discussion of its proper scope, theoretically speaking, we find quite a difference in opinion. Mr. Legler's experience prompts him to state his thus:

"It seems to me that municipal reference work need not necessarily be a part of its scope primarily, but that it should be affiliated therewith through an institution in the City Hall. It should, however, be a business men's branch as well as a reservoir of material available to graduate students, social workers, civic organizations and serious students of present-day problems."

And Miss Kammerling adds that they have not found it expedient to advertise the material for business men to any great extent because of the lack of space to expand.

Dr. C. C. Williamson, now head of the Municipal Reference Branch of the New York Public Library, takes a somewhat different view: "I should be inclined myself," says Dr. Williamson, "if I were charged with the organization and management of a civics department in a public library, to assign to it nearly all matters which are included in the data presented each week in the Public Affairs Information Service 'Bulletin' published by the H. W. Wilson Company." And further: "I should not include business, commerce, etc., as would be expected in a business branch. I would have it cover municipal reference work, legislative reference work, social betterment, etc., and make it cater to every want relating to government and social

<sup>1</sup>1912-1913; 1913-1914.

<sup>2</sup>See also A. L. A. *Bulletin* 7:339-42 (Kammerling) and *Public Libraries* 17:221-22.

welfare." Mr. Wheeler of Los Angeles inclines to this view also. He would prefer business books in an industrial department if no separate business department exists, but should only one special department be possible he would stretch its scope to include education, civics proper and business subjects.

Miss McCormick in Cleveland believes a civics department, a municipal reference library and a business branch three distinct institutions, each serving a separate need. Mr. Ranck of Grand Rapids deems it both extremely difficult and unwise for a library in advance to limit the scope of any particular line of work. He would have it work out its own salvation, letting community demands on the one hand and existing library service and resources on the other be the determining factors in the development of the work.

Perhaps this speculative exercise has been carried far enough, but I will venture my own opinion, which I find partially shared by one or two others, and I will borrow some of the language of Mr. Wheeler. He writes:

"The difficulty is that most libraries in branching out into special fields, are not able to undertake more than one special department, on account of lack of funds. Consequently, in actual practice these special departments include more than their name would imply, and oftentimes contain a mixture of material that is in a way inconsistent, but which proves really useful and usable."

Whether a civics room is to be in the main library building or apart from it is, to my mind, an important factor in determining its scope, and the size and location of the main library building are fundamental considerations making any generalization almost impossible. However, for a civics room with a main building in a city already having the more specialized municipal reference library in the City Hall, I fail to see where Chicago's plan can be improved upon. With a main library so located that a separate civics room in a more central location would attract a large pa-

tronage, my present inclination would be to combine government, social welfare and business in one department, but I agree with Mr. Wheeler that where an industrial department is possible in addition, then business, industrial, and technical subjects should form one group, and government and social welfare another. If we could place our ideal main building and City Hall next to each other in a central business location our problem would be much simplified.

Some of the administrative problems and methods of the civics room seem already solved for us. Pamphlets, clippings and fugitive material generally, closely classified but uncataloged, appear reasonably accessible, whether in labelled pamphlet boxes on shelves or cared for in vertical files, and both the dictionary arrangement and the Decimal Classification for vertical files have their strong adherents. Also there exists in some quarters a tendency toward but one file for all material in a special library of this character. From Newark, whence so many good ideas emanate, we may expect soon some special advice on map filing. Miss Kammerling reports that in Chicago they have solved the problem of circulation of the material by having package libraries made up, which contain practically the same material as is to be found in the boxes.

The last few years have witnessed much progress in the problem of securing information regarding the appearance of valuable so-called fugitive material in the general field of public affairs and also in the actual acquiring of the material itself. These sources of information have been made familiar to us through articles in the library press and the proceedings of this Association. Elsewhere I have listed fairly comprehensively<sup>1</sup> most of them that had appeared by the spring of 1914. Since then some new ones have appeared and

<sup>1</sup>Kaiser, *Law, Legislative and Municipal Reference Libraries*, Boston Book Co. 1914, 467 pages. See pages 80-170; 187-88; 261-323; (especially p. 109-116; 125-128; 187-188; 228-229; 274-276; 280-281; 285-6; 321-23.)

some older ones have developed materially.

All agree that the weekly "Bulletin" of the Public Affairs Information Service which cumulates bi-monthly and annually, now published by the H. W. Wilson Company for the co-operating institutions, takes first place in this field and is truly a clearing house of public affairs information. If any are unfamiliar with this service it will repay immediate investigation. It gives information regarding public affairs, events, and publications, and in some cases will even supply the publication listed.

Another new publication to be specially mentioned in this connection is "Information—A Digest of Current Events, including Index to Dates," an outgrowth of the "Index to Dates" published monthly with quarterly cumulations by the R. R. Bowker Company. This is broader in scope than Public Affairs, covering international events also, but leads to documents and publications only indirectly.

"Municipal Reference Library Notes," published since December 1914 by the New York Public Library under the direction of Dr. C. C. Williamson, now shares first place with the "National Municipal Review" as a source of information on current publications of all kinds relating to municipal affairs. Its weekly appearance, its annotations and its special features, such as lists of current New York City publications, give it a unique position in this class of literature.

In the more technical lines should be noted the Current Literature References multigraphed weekly by the library of Stone and Webster,<sup>1</sup> and the "Reference Bulletin" begun in April 1915 by the Index Office, Chicago.

Our most useful guides, then, to current public affairs information would include the "American City," the "American Political Science Review," the "American Economic Review," the "Bulletin" of the Public Affairs Information Service, the "Con-

gressional Record," the "Monthly Catalogue" of the Superintendent of Documents, the "National Municipal Review," "Special Libraries," "State Publications," the "Survey," the "Municipal Journal and Engineer," "Municipal Engineering," "Information," "Municipal Reference Library Notes" (N. Y.), the Stone and Webster "Current Literature References" and Index Office "Reference Bulletin."

The three types of library work, municipal reference, civics room and business branch, which may or may not be properly assigned to a civics room, are confronted by many of the same unsolved or only partially solved problems. The next step, then, is to attempt to solve these problems. One who has for some time left the field of special library work, though his interest in it remains, would be unqualified to offer solutions, but perhaps a small service can be rendered those most concerned by furnishing here a collective statement of these problems, and an indication in some cases of the direction in which a solution may perhaps lie. Discussion may clear up some matters at once.

From those actually confronted by them I have secured this list of difficulties:

1. The replacing of uncataloged pamphlet material stolen from pamphlet files. (Would a brief entry shelf list be worth the time?)
2. Getting in contact with the latest pamphlet material. (Public Affairs Information Service approaching a solution.)
3. To expand the Wisconsin classification (*cf.* Los Angeles Public Library "Bulletin" for May 1915.)
4. Administering a special library within a general library, especially securing prompt and efficient action in ordering and securing material.
5. The need of expert knowledge in so many fields of work.
6. Securing specific information on the practice of cities with reference to practical problems. City records give insufficient data, particularly cost data.
7. Locating fugitive material in time to secure it before it is out of print.

<sup>1</sup> Temporarily suspended.

8. Securing reports from other cities. Permanent central distributing agency needed.

9. Lack of promptness in publishing municipal reports and poor indexes.

10. Difficulty of obtaining and indexing current and recent ordinances.

11. Do municipal reference libraries attempt to index ordinances of their own city? To what extent index ordinances of other cities? Inadequate indexes to municipal magazines and municipal subjects in technical and general magazines.

12. Securing questions from city officials in time to make the necessary research, especially when correspondence is involved.

13. The best method of calling the attention of officials and civic workers to new material for them. Compare New York "Municipal Reference Library Notes" and the Cleveland experiment, as follows:

"We have a brief file of guide cards headed with names of city officials, departments, divisions, and bureaus of the city. As we add books, pamphlets, etc. or find magazine articles of unusual value, we note these in pencil on a slip of paper, stamp the date when noted, and drop the slip behind the name or department for whose benefit it is noted. These slips are later compiled into very brief lists and handed to persons or departments. We have found that, almost invariably, officials will read a few pointed references given them, but they do not always read the same kind of references when they are included in a longer list embracing material not especially applicable to their work."

What was suggested a year ago is still true.<sup>1</sup> In the field of library science a classification acceptable to special libraries operating in the public affairs field and sufficiently flexible to keep up with current developments is still a desideratum; so also is a standard guide in assigning subject headings or, better, a standardization of civic nomenclature, as Miss Hasse has phrased it in her appeal before you last

year for an enlarged, progressive and standardized civic bibliography.<sup>2</sup>

The list of technical desiderata could easily be extended but one more must suffice. Compilations of the ordinances of a number of cities on single subjects,<sup>3</sup> edited with historical, descriptive and evaluating notes are practically unknown, though they would form a class of material of inestimable worth in municipal reference work.

Definite progress has been made in the field of co-operation, instanced especially in the development of the Public Affairs Information Service and the increasing membership of special library workers in such associated organizations dealing with public affairs as the National Municipal League, the American Political Science Association, American Bar Association, the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the Special Libraries Association, and a host of others. Membership in as many local civic and other organizations as is possible by staff members is most commendable, and the last report of the Seattle Public Library illustrates their belief in this plan. The librarian himself should not neglect business men's organizations and has a place in the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club as well as on the golf links if his inclinations and abilities lead him that way. Some see in the establishment of a National Department of Municipalities in our government, and then an International Municipal Congress and Bureau the greatest step in co-operation in the field of municipal affairs.

Perhaps you feel we are getting away from a discussion of the civics room in the individual library, but I think this is all relevant matter and that the subject leads naturally to its larger aspect, the civic opportunity of the library, and the part the library can play in the new movement for training for public service. And this part is not limited to furnishing data to hundreds of civil service applicants

<sup>1</sup>Kaiser *ibid.* p. 228-33; 342-43.

<sup>2</sup>A. L. A. *Bulletin* 8:306-9.

<sup>3</sup>Some are mentioned in Kaiser *ibid.* 276-80.

which the Chicago Civics Room does on so large a scale. Please note that the Committee on Practical Training for Public Service<sup>1</sup> of the American Political Science Association is headed by Dr. Charles McCarthy of the Wisconsin Legislative Reference *Library*, and that it was a *library* school (Wisconsin) which inaugurated a course in "library administration and public service." The college librarians must take note here and we should all of us realize the significance of the report of another committee of the American Political Science Association, that dealing with instruction in political science in colleges and

universities.<sup>2</sup> In its suggestions for improving the situation in universities it asks an inquiry into library appropriations for the purchase of books and documents.

May we not say now that it is fairly clear that the library has a definite place in the civic development of the American community? It is certainly responding to the public demand for an instrumentality that shall lead to a more enlightened and more efficient citizenship. The civics room in the library is one means we have evolved for this use and if properly advertised and developed it will become the people's school and will tend to create an effective check on radical self-government and an effective incentive toward true democracy.

<sup>1</sup>See Preliminary Report in American Political Science Association *Proceedings* 1914, page 301-56.

<sup>2</sup>American Political Science Review 9:353-74 (May 1915.)

## CLEVELAND EXPERIENCE WITH DEPARTMENTALIZED REFERENCE WORK

BY CARL P. P. VITZ, *Cleveland Public Library*

The Cleveland Public Library is trying out an organization for central building library work differing decidedly from the arrangement usual in libraries. Briefly, the formerly circulating and reference departments are merged and are operated under one immediate administration. This greater unit is then subdivided along subject lines into divisions, as technology, sociology, fine arts, etc. In this arrangement, books on the same subject, whether intended primarily for reference or for circulation, are shelved together or in close proximity, are administered by one division staff and used in the same floor area.

After years spent in a building which cramped all attempts at expansion the Cleveland Public Library is at present in satisfactory temporary quarters, and is awaiting the planning and erection in the near future of a worthy and adequate permanent building. We are therefore definitely trying out the present plan and will decide upon the fundamental arrangement in the new building, very largely in the light of our present experience.

As our present plan is worked out in a

commercial building not at all planned with a view to library use, it seems necessary in our discussion to keep its unusual features in mind, especially as they result in some advantages and some disadvantages. Our entire public work is on one long and comparatively narrow floor. It is 450 feet long and 100 feet in width for 180 feet of its depth, and for almost the entire remainder has a width of 85 feet. The north and south walls and almost all of the west side are practically solid glass, the remainder, solid walls. The ceiling is fifteen feet high. Five large skylights add very materially to the successful lighting of the room. A stack two stories in height and accommodating 250,000 volumes is placed against the windowless east wall. Most of its lower tier is open-access. The Poole sets and the upper tier are restricted. It is to be noted that all of the shelving, which serves to break up the room into alcoves is freely accessible to the public and contains the bulk of both the circulating and reference books in most of the classes. The chief exception is in the fine arts division, where the expensive refer-